



Expert Profiles



David Godfrey, Executive Director - David oversees all aspects of the organization's programmatic, organizational and financial activities. With nearly 20 years experience conducting environmental education and conservation advocacy campaigns, David participates in many of Sea Turtle Conservancy's conservation activities, especially those related to building public awareness and promoting policies that improve sea turtle protection at the local, state, national and international level. David has particular expertise in the areas of coastal management policy, international sea turtle trade, and the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge -- along with thorough knowledge about all areas of Sea Turtle Conservancy's research, education and advocacy work.



Dr. Emma Harrison, Scientific Director - Emma received her PhD in 2001 from Manchester Metropolitan University in Manchester, England. Her first experience with sea turtles was as a Research Assistant for Sea Turtle Conservancy during the 1998 Green Turtle Program in Tortuguero. After completing her doctorate she returned to work for Sea Turtle Conservancy as the Field Coordinator in Tortuguero from 2002-2004. She has been Sea Turtle Conservancy's Scientific Director since December 2006, responsible for overseeing the scientific components of the Tortuguero and Chiriquí Beach research and monitoring projects. She is based at the regional office in San José, where she selects research personnel, analyses data, writes reports, helps with grant proposals and other turtle related issues.



Marydele Donnelly, Director of International Policy - Marydele has worked for more than 20 years to resolve difficult sea turtle conservation issues, such as the 10-year campaign to require U.S. shrimpers to use turtle excluder devices (TEDs). She has successfully promoted national and international policies to safeguard sea turtles, including fisheries regulations, the InterAmerican Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles and the U.S. Marine Turtle Conservation Act. Reducing the accidental capture of sea turtles in fisheries remains her primary focus. Prior to joining Sea Turtle Conservancy, Marydele directed Ocean Conservancy's sea turtle conservation program and served as the Program Officer for the global IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group from 1994-2001. Marydele holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Zoology from the University of Maryland.



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Dan Evans, Technology & Research Specialist - Dan is responsible for Sea Turtle Conservancy's educational activities, public presentations, organizing volunteers to help with sea turtle monitoring research programs, and is the principle investigator on Sea Turtle Conservancy's sea turtle tracking research program. He received a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Management at the University of Massachusetts and an M.S. in Ecology and Conservation Biology at the University of Maryland, where he used GPS and GIS to map bird habitat use. Dan began attaching satellite transmitters to sea turtles in 2000 and is one of a small group of people to employ direct satellite transmitter on leatherback sea turtles. He has been involved in the deployment of more than 50 sea turtles since 2000. Using GIS, Dan maps the migration pathways for the tracked turtles and incorporates the maps into Sea Turtle Conservancy's online Sea Turtle Migration-Tracking Education Program, as well as publication in scientific journals.



Gary Appelson, Policy Coordinator – As policy coordinator, Gary is involved in all aspects of sea turtle conservation and policy. He is a registered lobbyist in Florida. He monitors the laws and regulations impacting sea turtles, coastal management and development policies, and coastal and nearshore environments. Gary advocates for policies that support the long term recovery and protection of Florida's sea turtle populations. Gary was the environmental representative on the 2006 legislatively-mandated Coastal High Hazard Study Committee; recently served on the Florida's Beach Management Working Group; and is currently serving on the steering committee developing a statewide Beach Habitat Conservation Plan.



Karen Shudes, Sea Turtle Lighting Specialist - Karen is responsible for mitigating beachfront lighting issues in Florida. Prior to joining Sea Turtle Conservancy, Karen worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) as a sea turtle specialist reviewing and approving lighting plans for new coastal construction projects along Florida's coasts. Karen was in charge of FWC's Wildlife Lighting Program and was responsible for certifying light fixtures and bulbs that met specific sea turtle-friendly criteria. Karen traveled the state teaching FWC's Official Marine Turtle Lighting course to state and local agencies as well as non-profit groups and private lighting companies. Karen joined STC in 2010 as a sea turtle lighting specialist tasked with retrofitting of thousands of problem lights around Florida as part of a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant. Karen received a M.S. from the Oceanography department at Florida State University and studied sea turtle conservation at Universidad de la Tierra in Oaxaca, Mexico.